

What is claimed is:

1. A method for facilitating use of a system that includes at least one host and at least one controller, comprising:

conducting a bus scan at a first host for obtaining, by a first controller, first information for identifying said first host; and

5 using said first information by said first controller in facilitating use of the system.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said bus scan is also conducted for identifying a plurality of different components operatively attached to a bus of said first host.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein said conducting step does not include activating a programmatic element, on said first host, for obtaining said first information, wherein said programmatic element is able to obtain said first information without activating a bus scan.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein said conducting step includes transmitting said first information, including a world wide name for said first host, to said first controller via a fibre channel network.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein said conducting step includes receiving by said first controller said first information, including a world wide name for said first host via a communications network.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein said using step includes configuring said first controller so that said first host has access to said at least one logical storage unit.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein said using step includes providing access to a predetermined data repository, wherein for each of a plurality of host components, said data repository includes corresponding identification data, wherein for at least most of said host components, said corresponding identification data is accessible  
5 independently of whether a host requesting access to said first storage controller includes said host component.

8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said predetermined data portion includes an identification of a manufacturer of a component of said first host.

9. The method of Claim 8, wherein said component includes a host adapter.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein said step of using includes presenting to an administrator host identifying data indicative of said first information, wherein said presenting of said host identifying data is distinguished from a presenting of other information for identifying at least a second host so that the administrator can identify  
5 said presentation of said host identifying data from said presentation of said other information for said second host by a display attribute that is substantially independent of a content of at least one of said host identifying data and said other information.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein said display attribute includes at least one of: a display order of said presentation of said host identifying data, a display location of said presentation of said host identifying data, and a display highlight or color of said presentation of said host identifying data.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein said display order includes providing said presentation of said host identifying data before said presentation of said other information.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein said step of using includes:  
presenting, to an administrator of said first controller, host identifying data indicative of said first information;

5 receiving input from the administrator of separate information for identifying said first host; and

at least one of: (a) displaying said separate information with at least a portion of said host identifying data and (b) displaying said separate information in place of at least a portion of said host identifying data.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein said separate information assists the administrator in identifying said first host.

15. The method of Claim 13, wherein a presentation of said separate information includes at least one of: textual data representing said separate information, a hyperlink for said separate information, and a menu for activating one or more tasks related to managing said logical storage units.

16. A method of Claim 13, further including:

using, by the administrator, said separate information for at least one of: assigning, designing and changing access permissions to one or more logical storage units available to said first host.

17. A method of Claim 1, wherein data storage is part of the system.

18. The method of Claim 1, further including a step of obtaining a timestamp of when said first controller obtains said first information, wherein data indicative of said timestamp is available for presentation to an administrator of said first controller.

19. A method for facilitating use of a system that includes at least one host and at least one controller, comprising:

accessing, by a first controller, a network switch communicating with said first host for obtaining, by said first controller, first information for identifying said first host;

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using said first information by said first controller in facilitating use of the system.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein said using step includes determining whether said first information is: available via said network switch without accessing said first host, and includes at least one predetermined data portion for identifying said first host.

21. The method of Claim 19, wherein said accessing step includes querying said network switch for said first information, wherein said first information includes at least one of: a network address for said first host and a network communications protocol used by said first host.

22. The method of Claim 19, wherein said network switch is a storage area network switch that includes a fibre channel switch.

23. The method of Claim 22, wherein said querying step includes providing a world wide name for said first host to a database interface component of said fibre channel switch, wherein said world wide name is used for retrieving said first information.

24. The method of Claim 19, wherein said accessing step includes:  
registering said first controller with said network switch; and  
subsequent to completion of said registering step, receiving, by said first controller, information related to said network switch that is being contacted by one or  
5 more hosts for requesting access to said first controller.

25. The method of Claim 19, wherein said using step includes determining whether access to at least one of a plurality of logical storage units for said first host is to be granted.

26. An apparatus for facilitating use of a system that includes at least one controller that is accessible by one or more hosts, comprising:

a controller that:

- 5 (a) includes a network interface for receiving network transmissions from each of the one or more hosts;
- (b) determines, for at least a first host of the one or more hosts, first host identifying first information from a first of said network transmissions when said first network transmission is a result of a bus scan on said first host; and
- 10 (c) sends first host identifying data indicative of said first information to an administration subsystem.

27. The apparatus of Claim 23, wherein said controller accesses a network switch, via a transmission on a network, for obtaining second information for identifying the first host, wherein said transmission is provided to the network by said network interface.

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28. The apparatus of Claim 27, wherein one or more of:

- (a) said first information includes a world wide name for the first host; and
- (b) said second information includes one or more of: an identification of a manufacturer of a component of the first host, a network address for the first host, a network communications protocol being used by the first host, and a make or model of a component of the first host.

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29. The apparatus of Claim 26, wherein said administration subsystem includes a host identification processing subsystem for presenting said first host identifying data to an administrator for said apparatus, wherein said presentation of said first host identifying data is distinguished from a presentation of other information for identifying at least a second host so that the administrator can identify said presentation of said first host identifying data from said presentation of said other information for the second host using a display attribute.

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30. The apparatus of Claim 29, wherein said controller is accessed by the first host more recently than being accessed by the second host.

31. The apparatus of Claim 29, wherein said display attribute is substantially independent of content of said first host identifying data.

32. The apparatus of Claim 29, wherein said display attribute includes at least one of: a display order of said presentation of said first host identifying data, a display location of said presentation of said first host identifying data, and a display highlighting or color of said presentation of said first host identifying data.

33. The apparatus of Claim 32, wherein said display order includes providing said presentation of said first information before said presentation of said other information.

34. The apparatus of Claim 26, wherein said administration subsystem includes a host identification processing subsystem for:

- (a) presenting, to an administrator of said apparatus, via a display device, said first host identifying data;
  - 5 (b) receiving input, from the administrator, of third information for identifying the first host; and
  - (c) at least one of: (a) displaying said third information, via the display device, with at least a portion of said first host identifying data, (b) displaying said third information, via the display device, in place of at least a portion of said first host identifying data, and (c) using, by the administrator, said third information for one or more of: assigning, designing and changing access permissions to one or more logical storage units to the first host.
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35. The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein a presentation of said third information, via the display device, includes at least one of: textual data representing said third information, a hyperlink for said third information, and a menu for activating one or more tasks related to managing said logical storage units.

36. The apparatus of Claim 26, wherein said controller accesses a data repository including identification data for identifying at least one component of the first host, and said identification data is accessible from said data repository independently of a request for access to said controller by the first host.

37. The apparatus of Claim 26, further including a data store for storing data that includes at least a first data storage portion having an identifier known to at least the first host when the first host has access to said first data storage portion.

38. An apparatus for facilitating use of a system that includes at least one controller that is accessible by one or more hosts, comprising:

a controller that:

- (a) includes a network interface for receiving network transmission from each of the one or more hosts;
- (b) accesses a network switch, via a transmission on a network, for obtaining first information for identifying the first host, wherein said transmission is provided to the network by said network interface; and

10 (c) communicates with an administration subsystem related to said first information.

39. The apparatus of Claim 38, wherein said controller determines, for at least the first host, second information for identifying the first host from a bus scan on the first host.

40. The apparatus of Claim 39, wherein said first information includes one or more of: an identification of a manufacturer of a component of the first host, a network address for the first host, a network communications protocol being used by the first host, and a make or model of a component of the first host and said second information  
5 includes a world wide name for the first host.

41. The apparatus of Claim 39, wherein said administration subsystem presents first host identifying data indicative of said second information that is distinguished from a presentation of other information for identifying at least a second host using a display attribute.

42. The apparatus of Claim 41, wherein said display attribute includes at least one of: a display order related to said first host identifying data, a display location related to said first host identifying data and a display highlighting or color related to said first host identifying data.